

# **RED means STOP**

## Hialeah's Red-light Safety Program FAQs

### *Why has the City of Hialeah implemented an Intersection Safety Camera Program?*

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, nearly 2 million crashes annually occur in intersections. In 2007, red-light running resulted in almost 900 fatalities and 153,000 injuries.

Red-light running is a problem. It is believed that an automated red-light camera program will reduce the number of red-light collisions and injuries associated with these crashes. The purpose of this program is to increase traffic safety in Hialeah. The goal of the program is to reduce red-light running violations, crashes, and injuries without impacting city funds.

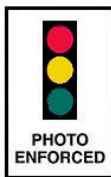
### *What is a red-light running violation?*

A red-light running violation occurs when a motorist enters an intersection after the traffic signal has turned red. Motorists already in the intersection when the signal changes to red, waiting to turn for example, are not considered red-light violators.

### *Where are the red-light cameras located?*

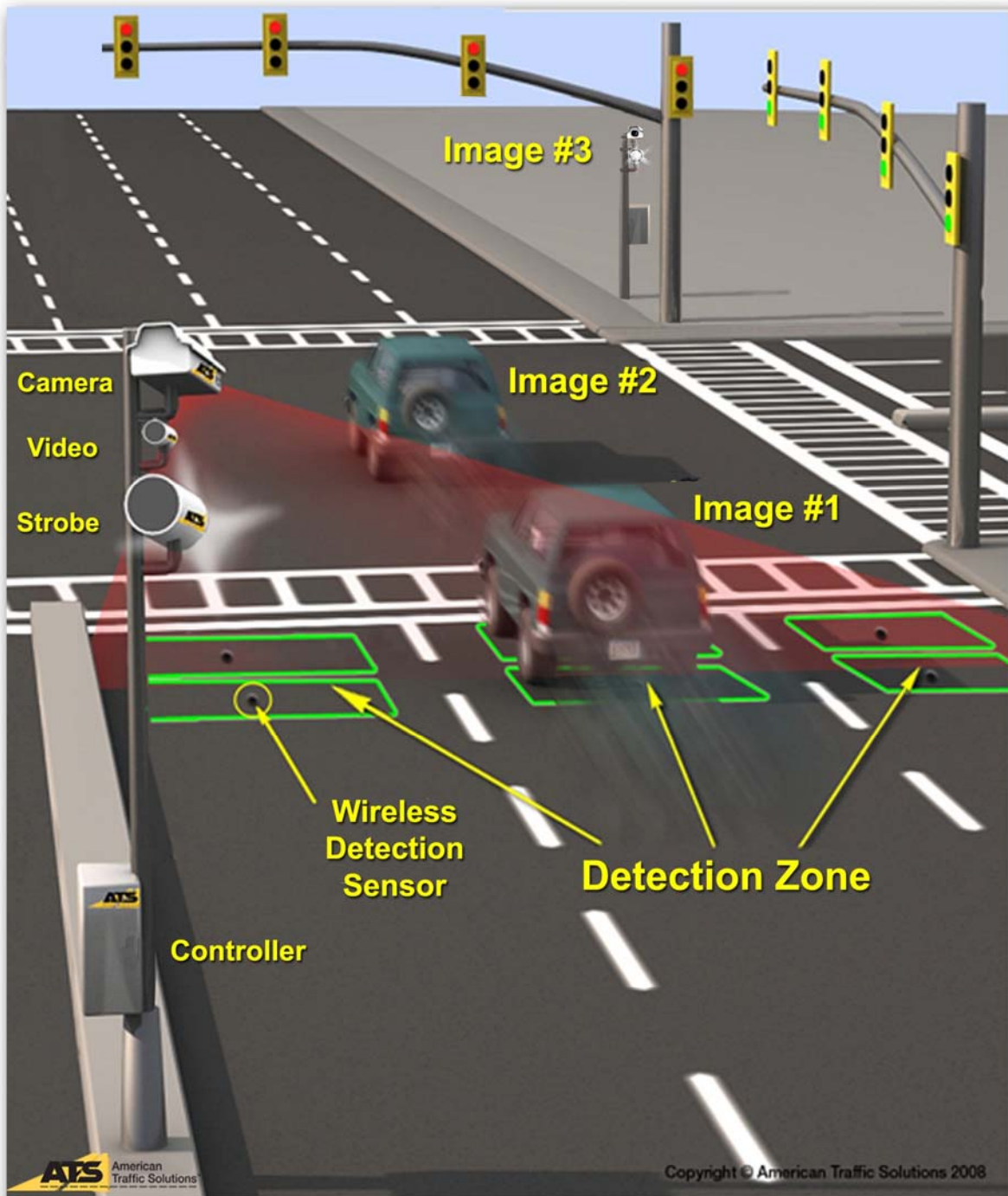
Red-light cameras have been installed at various intersections in Hialeah where the Police Department has determined would make the greatest impact on improving driver safety while decreasing traffic crashes.

Each intersection is marked clearly with signs.



Attention: if you have received a RED-LIGHT violation issued between April 1st, 2010 to April 30, 2010, do not pay any amount; these fines are null and void. Thank you.

How does the red-light camera work?



- The system activates when motion is detected just prior to the stop bar AFTER the traffic signal has turned red. The cameras capture two images of an alleged violation, taken from the rear of the vehicle.
- The first image shows the vehicle at the white stop bar and the illuminated red light.

- The second image shows the violator in the middle of the intersection with the red light illuminated.
- The license plate image is a close-up from one of the images captured.
- Data, including the time, date, and duration of the yellow and red lights, also is recorded.
- Cameras also record a 12-second digital video of the violation, including six seconds prior to and six seconds after running the red light.

#### *Why does the camera flash when no one actually runs the red light?*

The red-light camera system is designed to take two rear photographs of a vehicle that may be committing a violation. The first rear image captures the vehicle prior to entering the intersection with the traffic signal red, and the second image shows the vehicle continuing through the intersection during the red signal phase.

On occasion, a vehicle approaching an intersection with a red light may come to a stop before entering the intersection yet trigger the red-light camera system, causing the flash to discharge. In addition, a vehicle approaching the intersection and making a right turn may not come to a complete stop but only slow before continuing to turn, triggering the red-light camera system and causing the flash to discharge.

The Police Department reviews each violation event captured by the red-light camera system and makes the final decision to issue a citation. Not all flash incidents equate to a citation; however, the imaging results in 80%+ accuracy in identifying excessive speed approaches.

## What to do if you receive a Notice of Infraction

#### *Why did I receive this Notice of Infraction?*

Based upon images captured by the automated system, your vehicle was determined to have committed a red-light violation. As the vehicle owner, the Notice of Infraction is mailed to you.

#### *How much is the fine?*

The fine is \$125.00 for each offense.

#### *How much time do I have to pay my Notice of Infraction?*

You must pay the civil penalty on or before the due date on your Notice of Infraction. The due date for payment is located on the top and bottom right of your Notice of Infraction.

#### *What are my options?*

##### **1. Pay the fine.**

- **Pay Online.** Logon to [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) by entering your Notice number and PIN number shown in the red box on the front right of your Notice. Click the Pay button. There is a convenience fee of \$4.00, which will be assessed at the time of payment.

- Pay by **Mail**. Mail your check or money order, payable to City of Hialeah, in the enclosed envelope along with the coupon printed at the bottom of the notice. Write the Notice number and the license plate number on your check or money order. Do not mail cash. The mailing address is:

City of Hialeah  
Red Light Enforcement Program  
P.O. Box 742503  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45274-2503

- Pay by **Credit Card**. Call toll free 1-866-790-4111 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. There is a convenience fee of \$4.00 that will be assessed at the time of payment.

## **2. Request a hearing.**

You may request a hearing in writing. A Hearing Request Form will be included with the Notice of Infraction. The form can be found at [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com). Complete the form and mail it to the Violation Processing Center, P.O. Box 59995, Phoenix, AZ 85076-9995. Hearing options include a mitigation hearing in person or a mitigation hearing by mail to explain the circumstances or a contested hearing in person to contest the infraction.

## **3. Submit an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility.**

You may submit an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility. Submit it if your vehicle was sold or stolen. If the vehicle was in the care, custody or control of another person, the Affidavit must be notarized. You may obtain an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility by visiting [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) or at the Violation Processing Center, P.O. Box 59995, Phoenix, AZ 85076-9995. This Affidavit must be filled out accurately and in its entirety and presented to the court at the time of your hearing.

Visit [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) to view information about your Notice of Infraction. You will be asked to enter your Notice number and PIN number, found on the front of your Warning or Notice of Infraction in the upper right corner, inside the red box. By clicking on the graphic at left, you will leave the City of Hialeah site.

### *What if I was not the driver/owner of the vehicle at the time of the violation?*

Per the City of Hialeah, you may request a hearing and submit an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility by mail. The Affidavit must be filled out accurately and in its entirety. You may obtain this form either by downloading and printing the form from [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com). Bring the completed form to the Court in person on your hearing date.

### *What happens if I ignore the Notice of Infraction?*

Failure to pay the civil penalty or to contest liability prior to the due date on the Notice is an admission of liability, and failure to appear at an administrative adjudication hearing after having requested a hearing is an admission of liability and constitutes a waiver of the right to appeal. Failure to pay the civil penalty by the due date on the Notice of Infraction shall result in the imposition of a late-payment fee of \$25. If the second notice remains unpaid, collections and entry of a judgment against you may proceed.

### *Will I receive any points on my driving record for this Infraction?*

No. This is a civil infraction that is not reported to the Florida Department of Motor Vehicles.

*Will my insurance rates be affected?*

No. This is a civil infraction and is not reported to any insurance agencies.

*Will the red-light cameras take a picture of the driver of the vehicle?*

No. A violation of the City of Hialeah Ordinance is a civil violation assessed against the owner of the vehicle; it is not a criminal violation. Similar to a parking ticket, there is no need to identify the driver and therefore, no need to capture an image of the driver.

*What if I was issued a citation from an officer for the same offense?*

The citation issued by a police officer takes precedence over the Notice of Infraction. You must request an adjudication hearing and bring both the citation and the Notice of Infraction with you to the hearing. The adjudication hearing officer will take the appropriate actions.

*I have received multiple Notices of Infraction; do I have to send in a separate payment for each?*

No. You may send one check in one envelope – but you must include payment coupons for each Notice of Infraction you received. If you received three violation notices, you may send in one check and three coupons with each Notice number written on your check.

*What if my check bounces?*

You will be responsible for a returned check fee of \$25.00 – in addition to any late fees and the original fine amount. You will receive a letter from the City of Hialeah detailing the new amount due.

*What is the refund policy?*

A refund check may be issued under the following circumstances:

- Duplicate and/or overpayment of a Notice of Infraction; or
- Overpayment of the Notice of Infraction as a result of a hearing.

If you are entitled to a refund, please submit your request on the Red-Light Refund Form and send to the address specified at the top of the form.

*Can I make payments in installments or set up a payment plan?*

No. Payment plans are not available.

*My payment has already been sent; will I still be charged late fees?*

Late fees will NOT be assessed if your payment is postmarked on or before the due date located on the front of your Notice of Infraction.

*I paid the violation; why did I receive another Notice?*

The Notice you just received could be for additional violations or it could be a second notice, which is now a Delinquent Notice. If it is a Delinquent Notice, chances are that your payment and the Notice crossed in the mail. It can take as many as 10 business days to show in the system once it has reached our office. Call 1-866-790-4111 to confirm that your payment was received.

*My payment has already been sent; will I still be charged late fees?*

Late fees will NOT be assessed if your payment is postmarked on or before the due date located on the front of your Notice of Infraction.

*Do I have to pay my fine the day of the hearing?*

You must pay the full fine amount within 60 days of a liable judgment.

*What happens if I do not pay the fine?*

The City of Hialeah will begin collections of the civil penalty through a collections agency.

*I do not believe I ran a red light. Where can I go to view my images and video?*

To view video and images, logon to [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) and enter the Notice Number and the PIN Number located at the top right of your Notice of Infraction. If you do not have Internet access, you may visit any public library for Internet access to view your images.

*I do not believe I ran a red light and want to discuss my case with someone.*

You must request a hearing in writing on or before the due date listed on the top and bottom right of your notice in order to request a review of your Notice of Infraction before a hearing officer as detailed in the City Hialeah Ordinance.

*How do I schedule a hearing?*

To request a hearing, you must fill out the coupon, which is on the Notice of Infraction. The hearing options include the following:

**A mitigation hearing in person.** By requesting a mitigation hearing in person, you agree to appear at your scheduled hearing and will be deemed to have committed the infraction. You may not subpoena witnesses for this hearing. You would request a mitigation hearing if you agree that you have committed the infraction but believe the circumstances may be such that the court could reduce or waive the penalty.

**A mitigation hearing by mail.** You will not be required to appear in court. Instead, you must write a Defendant's Statement and Declaration and mail it with the coupon to the address shown on the coupon. The court will review your declaration, the photos/video of the incident and the police officer's sworn statement and render a decision.

**A hearing to contest the infraction.** At a contested hearing, the City has the burden of proving by a preponderance of evidence that the infraction was committed. You may subpoena witnesses including the officer who issued the Notice of Infraction.

*I am Handicapped and unable to appear in court for my hearing. What do I do?*

You must respond to your Notice of Infraction on or before your due date. If you wish to contest the Notice of Infraction, you do not need to appear before a hearing officer. However, you must submit in writing, on or before your due date, a copy of your disabled placard and a written explanation of your actions or concerns. This written explanation will be reviewed and a decision will be issued by mail.

*Can I make a hearing request over the phone?*

No, all requests must be in writing.



*Can someone other than me attend the hearing?*

Only you may appear at an adjudication hearing.

*Is there more than one place that I can attend my hearing?*

No, there is only one location. Hearings are held at 501 Palm Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Council Chambers, Hialeah FL 33010

*Can I bring a lawyer to the hearing with me?*

Yes.

*How do I know that these violations are valid?*

Images of your vehicle were captured and recorded by an Automated Intersection Safety System. You can review your images and video of the actual occurrence online. The images and video were reviewed by several qualified technicians and finally by the Hialeah Police Department before the alleged civil infraction was affirmed and mailed to you as the registered owner or identified driver. You have the option of contesting the Notice of Infraction by requesting a hearing in writing.

*What company provides the red-light camera program in City?*

The City of Hialeah has contracted with American Traffic Solutions Inc. (ATS) which provides red-light and speed camera enforcement programs for more than 200 communities across North America. More information about ATS is available at [www.atsol.com](http://www.atsol.com) or [www.RedLightCamera.com](http://www.RedLightCamera.com).

#### Red-light Running Facts



#### Red-light Running is a Dangerous and Costly Problem.

- Red-light running is the leading cause of urban crashes according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.
- In 2006, 144,000 injuries and nearly 900 fatalities in the U.S. were attributed to red-light running. There were more than 1.8 million accidents at intersections.

## **A Crash Caused by a Driver who runs a Red Light is more likely to Result in Serious Injury or Death.**

- Deaths caused by red-light running are increasing at more than three times the rate of increase for all other fatal crashes.
- More people are injured in crashes involving red-light running than in any other crash type.
- Reduction in red light running through a comprehensive red-light camera program will promote and protect the public health, safety and welfare of Hialeah's citizens.

## **Most People Run Red Lights because they are in a Hurry, when in Fact They Save Only Seconds.**

- Almost all drivers (96%) fear being struck by a red-light runner.
- A majority of Americans (56%) admit to running red lights.
- Red-light runners can be anyone who drives.
- One in three Americans knows someone who has been injured or killed in a red-light running crash.
- Red-light running is often a result of aggressive driving and is completely preventable.

Sources: "Stop Red Light Running," Federal Highway Administration Safety Website: [safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/srlr.htm](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/srlr.htm).2002.

R. A. Retting and A.F. Williams, "Characteristics of Red Light Violators: Results of a Field Investigation," Journal of Safety Research (1996): 27.1, 9-15.

## **Red-light Cameras Increase Safety by Changing Driver Behavior in the Long Run**

In a 2007 study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, researchers tallied signal violations at intersections in **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** before and after red-light camera enforcement was in effect for about one year and found the cameras reduced violations by 96 percent.

Since May 2007, the city of **St. Louis, Missouri** has experienced a 49 percent reduction in citations at the first two photo-enforced intersections.

The city of **Cathedral City, California** reported a 50 percent decrease in the number of citations issued since 2007 and a 30 percent decrease in the number of reported traffic collisions at photo-enforced intersections.

The city of **Seattle, Washington** reported a 50 percent decrease in violations during the first year of its pilot program with six initial camera sites.

After the city of **Gallatin Tennessee**, installed red-light cameras in 2006, citations for red-light running are down more than 40 percent and traffic accidents have reduced by 25 percent. [Tennessean.com](http://Tennessean.com) 09.04.08

In, **Garland, Texas** crashes caused by red-light runners decreased by 56 percent (from 43 crashes to 19) at four intersections with red-light cameras installed. Overall, crashes reduced by 25 percent, and all injury crashes reduced by 27 percent.



After the first six months of its Intersection Safety Program, **Houston, Texas** reported a 30 percent decrease in overall crashes.

From 1994-2005, red-light running violations decreased 73% in **New York City**.

Accidents are down 11 percent in intersections with red-light cameras in **Arnold, Missouri**. At one intersection in front of a school, accidents decreased 50 percent.

During its first year of operation, the City of **Florissant, Missouri** saw a 51 percent reduction in citations at intersections with safety cameras.

In **Calgary, Canada**, the city reported a 29.4 percent decrease in total right-angle collisions, a 39.4 percent decrease in injury right-angle collisions, and a 100 percent decrease in fatal right-angle collisions.

Statistics from the **Red Bank, Tennessee** Police Department show a 13.8 percent reduction in collisions citywide on a year-over-year basis. Collision reductions at camera-equipped intersections resulted in even greater reductions.



*Drive Safely*